

Fresh Start

By Jerry Bader

No, He's Got This

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A couple of years ago, at age 53 and for the first time in my life, I started lifting weights. I have a friend who is an accomplished weightlifter and he (unlike me) was convinced I could one day sport the 48-inch chest he has (Spoiler alert: I was right). With each session, Ron, as my spotter, would push me to a new "max-lift." As he would give me "a lift" with the bar off the rack, he would transfer the entire weight to me with a reassuring "you've got this." Sometimes I did. Other times Ron would rescue me by returning the bar to the rack and I would (try to) hide my disappointment.

This experience came some two years before I would come to accept Jesus as the One, true "spotter." In fact, He's more than that; He doesn't hand the weight to us, His only desire is for us to hand it to Him. Only of Him can it truly be said "He's got this." Just as with each lift Ron put more weight on me, each day God desires for us to turn more of our burden over to Him. As challenging as we may find this, the Bible is filled with illustrations of what a prideful boast "I've got this" really is.

David was dismissed by Saul as a mere shepherd boy when he dared to suggest that he could take on Goliath:

"You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth." 1 Samuel 17:33. David left no doubt as to why he didn't fear Goliath: "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." (vv 36-37)

Saul's reply to David was: "Go and the Lord be with you."

David didn't say, "I got this." He was essentially telling Saul, "God's got this." And David would, of course, go on to defeat Goliath and become one of the most righteous kings of the Old Testament. Yet how often do we go into life's battles with a self-confidence building "I got this," instead of bringing the challenge of the day to God and praying, "I know You got this?" How willing are we to transfer all the weight on the bar to Him? How willing are we to trust that God won't let the weight crush us, or have our personal Goliath(s) defeat us?

In Daniel 6:23 we read that the king was delighted to learn that Daniel had survived a night in the lion's den: *"The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God."*

The king may have been surprised that Daniel survived the night, but Daniel was not. He never doubted for a moment that God would deliver him. "God's got this."

As a friend of mine says, “to say you trust in God and then cross your fingers is just wishful thinking.” Can you imagine David saying, “I *hope* I can beat Goliath?” Or Daniel *hoping* the lions didn’t devour him? Yet, how often do we “hope” the conflict with our co-worker resolves itself. Or how often do we “hope” our finances, or our relationship, or our health issues just “work themselves” out?

Further, would you even consider challenging a highly trained soldier who, by today’s estimates, was nine feet tall by saying “I got this?” Would you enter that battle without trusting the outcome to God, **completely**? Would you enter a lion’s den without **fully** trusting your fate to God? The truth is that if you struggle trusting God that completely, then you’re in pretty good company.

In Matthew 14:13-21, the disciples expected Jesus to send the gathered crowds away so the people could find something to eat. They were incredulous when Jesus assured them that they would be able to feed everyone who was there. And, through a miracle by Jesus, they fed a crowd of more than 5,000 with “only five loaves of bread and two fish.” The disciples literally walked with Jesus and yet, at times, even they doubted whether “He had this.”

So, when you find yourself struggling with the weight on the bar in your life, or simply are not hearing from God, you may want to ask yourself: “Do I really trust God to “have this,” whatever the “this” might be? Or am I engaging in “wishful thinking?” And do you tell yourself each morning that whatever the day may bring “He’s got this?”

“Cast all your cares on Him because He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7

Father God, we pray that we remember each day to face all worldly challenges knowing “You’ve got this.” Help us to remember that all things we accomplish we do so through You. May we remember that all challenges in this world are over our head and none are too large for You. We ask this in Your name. Amen.